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CORRECT ENGLISH
TRANSLATION.

TIEFLAND

PUBLISHED BY

FRED. RULLMAN, INC.

NEW YORK CITY

THE ONLY CORRECT AND AUTHORIZED EDITION



Tiefland

"Tiefland" is a story of Spain: its *locale*, the Pyrenees mountains; its characters, the peasants in this tiny village in the valley (the "Tiefland" or "Lowlands"), still living under a sort of feudal system; the "Master"—Sebastiano—literally owning them all, body and soul.

High in the mountains lives Pedro, a shepherd; simple, guileless, devout—alone—who joyfully greets Nando, the first human being with whom he has spoken in three months. In answer to Nando's question if such loneliness is not terrible, Pedro answers that it is all beautiful to him; he dreams his days and nights away and prays always that God may send him a wife. He admits that he has never spoken with a woman, but he has had a wonderful dream which he repeats to Nando, in which the Madonna has promised him that God will send him a wife. Sebastiano arrives, and with him are Tomasso, the village patriarch, and a woman—Marta! While Tomasso goes to Pedro's hut to call him, Sebastiano tells Marta his plan: she is to marry Pedro. She refuses, defies, pleads, but Sebastiano is the master, and he remains obdurate. As Pedro comes Marta disappears down the mountain-side.

Sebastiano offers Pedro the management of the mill, and Marta as his wife, but he says nothing to Pedro of the relationship existing between himself and Marta. Upon Tomasso's advice and remembering the dream-promise, Pedro joyfully accepts, and departs for the valley.

Act I. The interior of the mill; Moruecio—the assistant miller—at work. Three of the village women rush in excitedly, questioning Moruecio about Marta's marriage. Moruecio remains morosely silent, but Nuri—a child so simple she doesn't even know the meaning of what she has heard—comes seeking Marta, and innocently tells them all they would know—and even more. One thing she doesn't understand, she says: She knows they all belong to Sebastiano, but she has heard him say that he will be Marta's eternally. How can that be?

Marta comes and drives out the women who taunt her. She greets Nuri lovingly, but sends her away also, and—left alone—becomes lost in contemplation of the fate which threatens her—finally rushing from the mill.

Tomasso comes and Moruecio tells him Sebastiano is forcing Marta to marry Pedro to quiet the village gossip, so that Sebastiano may replenish his fortunes through a rich marriage. Tomasso refuses to believe Moruecio. Pedro arrives, eager for the wedding. Tomasso endeavors to have a word with Sebastiano, but the latter has no time. Before Sebastiano sends them off to the wedding Marta tells him that all is over between them, but Sebastiano whispers that

TIEFLAND—Cont'd

he will come to her after the ceremony. Tomasso finally has an opportunity to talk with Sebastiano, and, becoming suspicious, starts for the church to halt the wedding, but he is too late.

After the wedding Marta and Pedro are left alone, but Marta does not respond to Pedro's love-making. He offers her a present of some money, which she refuses. It is hard-earned money, he tells her. For one of the thalers he has risked his life to protect the master's sheep from a wolf. Marta is touched, but says it is late and points to Pedro's room, which is on the opposite side of the mill. Pedro, however, starts toward her room just as a light appears behind her curtain. Sebastiano has dared to come! Pedro is unable to understand just what is happening, but when Marta sits down at the fireplace he lies down on the floor at her feet, to sleep.

The second act is the same: Nuri comes to wish them good-morning, but finds Pedro still asleep. When Marta returns and finds them talking together she becomes jealous and drives Nuri out. Pedro goes with her. Tomasso enters, and Marta tells him of her life: how as a child she stood begging with her blind mother. Then they were joined by an old man, and after her mother's death they two had wandered through the country, Marta dancing as he played. They had come here, and Sebastiano had asked them to stay. She was then only thirteen. Sebastiano came every day; coaxed and threatened; the old man beat her. Finally she yielded. Today, though, during the ceremony it had come to her that Pedro could and would care for her, protect and love her. Tomasso leaves, telling her she must tell Pedro all. When Pedro comes Marta tries to goad him into killing her, but begs him not to leave her. She finally accuses Pedro of having sold his honor, of having accepted money to marry her, infuriating him so that he does stab her in the arm. Pedro, overcome by remorse, asks how he could kill her when he loves her better than life. They will go back into his mountains and celebrate their marriage. As they start Sebastiano enters. He orders Marta to dance. Pedro interferes, and when Sebastiano strikes him Marta tries to make him defend himself, but, in awe of the master, he will not do so. When she finally tells him it was Sebastiano who was in her room Pedro attempts to attack him, but upon Sebastiano's command the villagers carry him away just as Tomasso enters to say that all is off between Sebastiano and his rich bride. Tomasso has told her father all. Pedro finally returns and challenges Sebastiano to fight for Marta: the one who survives is to have her. Pedro is victorious, and calls the villagers in. He has killed "The Wolf," and he and Marta are at liberty to return to the free air of his mountains.

1926-1927 Grand Opera Season

THURSDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 23, at 8

TIEFLAND

(The Lowland)
(In English)

Music-Drama in a Prologue and Two Acts.

Libretto after A. Guimera by Rudolph Lothar.

English Version of R. H. Klein, adapted for Chicago Civic Opera Co.

Music by Eugen d'Albert.

Sebastiano, a Rich Land Owner	Giacomo Rimini
Tomaso, the Village Elder, Aged Ninety	Alexander Kipnis
Moruccio, Miller's Man	Antonio Nicolich
Marta	Elsa Alsen
Pepa	Alice d'Hermanoy
Antonia	Irene Pavloska
Rosalia	Lorna Doone Jackson
Nuri	Helen Freund
Pedro } In Sebastiano's Service	Forrest Lamont
Nando } Shepherds	Jose Mojica
Conductor	Henry G. Weber
Stage Director	Charles Moor

Baldwin Pianos Used Exclusively

ENCORES NOT PERMITTED

SYNOPSIS ON NEXT PAGE

ELSA ALSEN

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The scene is laid partly on a mountain in the Pyrenees
Spanish Lowland of Catalonia at the foot of the Pyrenees.

Prologue: A Rocky Slope High up in the Pyrenees.

Acts I and II: The Interior of the Mill.

ARGUMENT

PEDRO is a shepherd lad of the Pyrenees. High above the lowland plains he guards the flocks of SEBASTIANO, his master, plays his rustic pipe and dreams of a good woman's love.

SEBASTIANO appears in the hills with MARTA—bought of a passing vagabond, she is the helpless slave of his brutal passion—and, since he must make a rich marriage, he plans to have innocent PEDRO marry her, meaning to enjoy her favor as before. PEDRO, ignorant of her past, sees in her the girl of his dreams. Willingly he agrees to wed her and to descend to the Catalonian Lowland village to become SEBASTIANO's miller there.

Little NURI, in SEBASTIANO's service, unwittingly discloses MARTA's shame, and mill folk and villagers mock her and the witless boy on his way from the hills to wed her. In vain MARTA begs SEBASTIANO not to force her into the marriage. His reply is the statement that he will visit her on her bridal night. After the wedding, alone with his wife, PEDRO's honest affection—he gives her all his wealth, the silver dollar awarded him for slaying a wolf)—brings home to the unfortunate girl the shamefulness of her situation. SEBASTIANO's signal light flashes in her bedroom, but she ignores it, and remains in the mill with her worshipping young husband.

But the light and MARTA's strange behavior, have aroused PEDRO's suspicions. Going down into the village he returns knowing MARTA is not the pure girl he thought her, but ignorant of her seducer's name. MARTA, who loves the boy since she found he was innocent of any knowledge of her guilt, but feels that now she never can win his heart, taunts him, hoping he will slay her. But he, in turn, when his dagger draws her blood, realizes he loves her despite all, and when she passionately admits her own love for him he begs her to leave the miasmic Lowland air and return with him to the high hills, where the winds of heaven blow clean and pure. There—poor victim of an unscrupulous lust—her misfortune shall be forgotten, and they will be happy in their affection. But SEBASTIANO who enters brutally insists that MARTA dance for him, and when PEDRO, as she indignantly denounces her betrayer to him, intervenes, he is flung out of the house. The news brought by TOMMASO, a village elder, that the rich widow whom SEBASTIANO hopes to marry will have none of him, maddens the brutal Lowlander. MARTA cries for help as he clasps her, fighting against his kisses, and PEDRO leaps through the window. Flinging himself on the infamous mill-owner he strangles him with his bare hands, as he strangled the wolf in the hills. While he flings the dead body from him the horrified villagers, who have run up and witnessed the struggle stand aghast: they bow to the judgment of God, and hand in hand PEDRO and MARTA spurn the dust of the Lowlands from their feet as they turn their faces toward the high hills and happiness to come.

CHARACTERS

SEBASTIANO, a rich landed proprietor	TOMMASO, the village elder, aged 80
MORUCCIO, miller's man	{ In SEBASTIANO's Service { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ROSALIA NURI PEDRO, a shepherd NANDO, a shepherd
MARTA	
PEPA	
ANTONIA	

A PRIEST

The opera plays partly on a mountain pasturage in the Pyrenees, partly in the Spanish Lowland of Catalonia at the foot of the Pyrenees.

Stage directions: Right and left as from the auditorium.

TIEFLAND

PRELUDE

A rocky slope, high up in the Pyrenees. From the extreme foreground the stage slopes upward, almost half as high as the proscenium. On this slope, on the left, stands a primitive shepherd's hut. In front of it a well and a trough. On the left the declivity is lost among boulders. Behind the hill, which thus occupies the whole width of the stage, a deep hollow appears to lie. Beyond the hollow rise the snow-covered peaks of the Pyrenees in strange fantastic forms. In the center a huge glacier, with an enormous rocky mass beside it.

SCENE 1

(About 3 o'clock a. m. Starlit sky. The whole background is invisible—veiled in mists. On the stage: dawn, in which the outlines of the hut can just be dimly distinguished. The stage is empty.)

NANDO *(invisible from below)*
Ohe!

PEDRO *(invisible, above on the left, replies)*
Ohe!

(After a while NANDO comes in sight on the right front and PEDRO appears above, by the hut.)

PEDRO
The Lord in heav'n be praised.

NANDO
For evermore!

PEDRO
Is it toward the East your flock you're leading?

NANDO
Up to the mountains.

PEDRO
Mind the wolves up yonder!

NANDO

I have my slings and I've my trusty dog.

PEDRO

And I have faith in God!
(Both now meet on the middle of the hill. From the hollow below the tinkle of sheebells is heard.)
'Twill be a lovely morning.

NANDO

When all the mist has vanished.

PEDRO

Give the good shepherds greeting.

NANDO

Have you not seen them?

PEDRO

Three months have now gone by
Since I have seen a living soul;
And 'tis six months ago
Since I held speech with any;
And when you disappear behind the mountain,
Then many weeks and months may vanish.
Nay, perhaps a year,
Before I speak a word with human being.

NANDO

And is your lonely life not dreadful?

PEDRO

I glory in my life!
I dream by night, and dream by day,
And feel so happy. Who could be happier?
Two Paternosters ev'ry night I say;
The first I say is for the parents
I never knew.
But dwelling up aloft by God's high throne,
They both are watching, full of love,
o'er me.
But now my second Paternoster;
That is a special prayer to God Himself.
I beg him ev'ry night
To send a wife to make life perfect.

NANDO (*laughs*)

A wife? Ha, ha! Do you know women? Why, have you ever talked to one, or seen one?

PEDRO

Not yet. How should a woman come up here?

But once a year from afar I have gazed at them

When in the vale below to church I went.

But I feel certain—that if God desires—

I, too, shall get a wife all in due season.

NANDO (*laughs*)

PEDRO

There is no cause to laugh. I mean it, truly.

Last night, as I was lying in my mountain shanty,

I just had finished saying my first prayer aloud.

Starting my second one,

But with the first few words I fell asleep.

And on my lips my pray'r remained unspoken.

And dreaming, suddenly I saw my flock

Take refuge in the valley yonder.

I gave it chase, and placing a stone

In my sling I threw it ahead

To keep the sheep from straying further.

The stone dropt in the Lake of Rocca-bruna.

The placid water seethes and boils

As if it were a caldron.

The vapors thicken, then they part asunder,

And from their depths arise a mysterious form.

A wondrous shining robe, a snowy arm,

A head with flowing golden hair—

"The witch!" I shriek aloud, "the mountain witch!"

But no! So fair no witch could ever be.

And suddenly the raging lake grows placid.

The apparition glides across the mere, approaches me.

She was so fair—that I cannot describe her.

And as she came the trees bowed down before her,

The buds awoke and turned to flower, and

The birds were singing as ne'er before;

They trilled and warbled till the hills resounded,

And all the world appeared to welcome her.

The apparition smiled and glided up to me,

Quite close to me. Then I knelt down before her,

And finished saying my second Pater-noster.

And now I know who the fair vision was:

The Virgin Mary in my dream I saw,
She came from heaven to tell me God
Will send me wife and happiness.

NANDO

You think that wife and happiness are one?

Hear what I tell you: between the two,
A bit of heaven and the whole of hell
you'll find!

You'll find that out yourself. Be sure of that!

PEDRO

I only wonder

From which direction she will come to me?

Now mark: within my sling a stone I now am placing,

And swinging it around. My eyes are closed.

And where the stone will fall, 'tis from that side

That she will come to me.

(*He throws the stone*)

SEBASTIANO'S Voice (*from far below on the right*)

Confound you fellows! Don't you see
That some one's coming?

This stone of yours had very nearly hit me!

NANDO

Why, who comes here?

PEDRO

What do I care? They can't want me!

NANDO (*looking down into the hollow*)

The master's coming! Don Sebastiano!
Surely you know the master? What-
ever you see

Belongs to him. The meadows, pas-
tures, corn fields,

The wood and river, herd and hut,
The village yonder and the mill stream,
Ev'rything you can think upon, is his.
And in his service are we all, we shep-
herds,

Those on the mountain-top and in the
valley.

And next to him, that is the elder
Of our village. Full ninety years
Tommaso carries on his shoulders.

PEDRO (*rising reluctantly*)

Into my hut I'm going. If they wish
For aught from me, then let them come
and fetch me.

(*He slowly goes up to the hut*)

NANDO (*looking down with eager
interest*)

And with the men there is, if I see
right,
A comely maiden! What can they be
wanting?

(*He laughs*)

Perhaps the Lord has kept His word
and sent
A wife for our Pedro!

SCENE II

(*Enter SEBASTIANO, MARTA and
TOMMASO*)

SEBASTIANO

Is Pedro not here?

NANDO

He is inside his cabin yonder.

SEBASTIANO

Tommaso, go and fetch him out. (*To
NANDO*)

And you, bring us bread and milk and
cheese.

The way was long, and I am hungry.

(*TOMMASO and NANDO go up to the
hut, which TOMMASO enters. NANDO
busies himself outside—fetches milk,
etc.*)

(*MARTA and SEBASTIANO alone
in the foreground*)

MARTA

Tell me why you dragged me here?

SEBASTIANO

Leave that to me! Besides, my child,
I have got a plan for you.

MARTA

Tell me, sir, for Christ's dear sake,
What you purpose.

SEBASTIANO

Have no fear!
You have always served me truly,
And you know I paid you well.
As a beggar-maid you came
Wand'ring hither with that ancient
Scamp, your father.
And you pleased me.
So I made your father my miller
Just to win your heart, my beauty.
Then the mill I gave to you
And made you mine in payment.
That's no more than fair and equal.

MARTA

Oh, 'tis dreadful; altho' I plead
With you to set me free,
'Tis in vain. You are the master.

SEBASTIANO

Yes, your master! And as such
I will now command you:

(*PEDRO appears above*)

Look at that young fellow there!
Handsome, eh, and young and hearty?
Him I choose to be your husband.

MARTA (*shrinking back in horror*)
Rather will I leap down yonder!

SEBASTIANO

Folly! Madness! Stay a bit.
Wait until I have explained it!
'Tis no idle whim of mine;
What is, that has to be.

MARTA

Oh, have mercy!

SEBASTIANO

Listen, child,
Just because I wish your welfare
I choose Pedro for your husband.

MARTA

(*Freeing herself from SEBASTIANO,
who was holding her hand*)

Let go, sir. I will not, will not!

SEBASTIANO

Marta, look at him just once!

MARTA

No! (*She wrenches herself free and
runs off*)

(PEDRO, *who has come quite close,
stands staring at her open-mouthed*)

PEDRO

Holy Virgin! Oh, how lovely!

SCENE III

PEDRO, SEBASTIANO, TOMMASO

(NANDO *has brought vessel with milk,
and has then returned to the hut,
where he busies himself unconcern-
edly.*)

SEBASTIANO

Well, good Pedro, tell me, pray,
Are you quite content here?

PEDRO

Why, indeed, most gracious master.

SEBASTIANO

Don't you wish for something better?

PEDRO

Don't see how!

SEBASTIANO

Shepherd life is very fine,
But you surely must know that
There are better things than that?
Look down there in yonder valley,
Stands a mill of mine.
Will you not be miller there?

PEDRO

If there's corn enough to grind
Well, why not?

SEBASTIANO

And besides this, you're to have
The miller's maid as wife.

PEDRO

If the damsel pleases me
And I her, I'll not say no.

SEBASTIANO

Why, you've seen her!
Well, will she do?

PEDRO

Are you making jest of me?
Am I dreaming still?

SEBASTIANO

Sit down here and hark to me:
My mill requires a head
Since the miller died.
My choice fell on you, my lad.
If you care, then leave your hills.
You take Marta as your wife
And I take you as miller.

PEDRO

Like a swarm of bees all your
Words are buzzing round my ears—
Are you jesting? Can you mean it?
May I thank the saints in heaven?
Will my dream be realized?

TOMMASO

Full many miles from here I dwell,
Far off beyond the mountains.
The master came to me,
And I gave him your name.
Tho' it is many years since I was here,
I know you well.
You are an honest fellow!
Say yes, my son, and take what God
has sent you,
Your master means you well. Thank
him for this.
May God, Who seeth ev'rything and
guides us all,
Watch over your new dwelling, and
send you
Peace and plenty.

SEBASTIANO

Your hand upon it.

PEDRO

Shall? May I?
Do you think she'll have me?
Won't she object that I'm too plain for
her?
She may say, "No, thanks!" look on
me with scorn?

SEBASTIANO

Leave that to me to answer for!
"Twill be all right.

PEDRO

She fled at sight of me.

SEBASTIANO

Women are like that.
Get yourself ready, come down in the
valley.
Tomorrow is your wedding day—
All preparations I have made.

PEDRO

Tomorrow? So much luck tomorrow?

TOMMASO

Good luck ne'er comes too soon!
Now it is here, don't let it go!

(SEBASTIANO and TOMMASO
prepare to depart)

SEBASTIANO

'Tis settled then; I'll wait in the mill
And bring your wife to you.

PEDRO

Tomorrow!

TOMMASO

God's blessing on your path!
(Exit SEBASTIANO and
TOMMASO)

SCENE IV

PEDRO NANDO

PEDRO

Well, did you hear?
I've got a wife, a gift from heaven.
I'm going down—

NANDO

The Lowland tempts you?
The houses there are cramped, the
mountains far,
The people crowded close together,
The sun himself is dull, and gray the
daylight,
And men fight and nag and quarrel
Without ceasing. The Lowland tempts
you.

PEDRO

'Tis my star that calls!
See that our flock is safe until our
master
Sends up another shepherd in my place.
(Meanwhile the mists have dispersed
and the sun rises in full glory over
the glacier.)
Now one last greeting to my moun-
tains,
I know you ev'ry one, ev'ry crag and
summit,
And ev'ry chasm, and ev'ry peaceful
meadow.
Here did I bask in thy golden radiance,
O sun,
Befriend me now, and shine upon my
path.

(PEDRO goes down the path. Al-
ready half behind the scenes)

See that my flock is safe; be watchful,
Nando;
Mind that the wolf does not come!
Look, how they're flocking and crowd-
ing around me!
Farewell, be sure that down below
I'the Lowland, I will not forget you!
Nor you, my good and trusty dog!
Farewell! Think too of me some-
times!
(He has quite disappeared from sight,
his voice sounds from below, grow-
ing more and more distant.)

The sun is shining on my downward
path,
The Lowland calls me!
(His voice dies away)
The curtain falls

ACT ONE

The interior of the mill. On the right, the big mill wheel, which is not working. Above it a very roughly constructed wooden trough which has no water in it. On the left, a door approached by two staircases, and hidden by a curtain. On the right, a small door. In the background the huge entrance gate, through which, when it is open, one can see far into the landscape. Far on the horizon the outlines of the glacier of the Prelude can be distinctly discerned. Above the gate a wooden gallery runs, at half the height of the Proscenium. On the left, in front, a large hearth. Sacks of corn, millstones, etc., lie about. Shortly before sunset. MORUCCIO alone on the stage, busy sieving corn.

The curtain rises

SCENE I

MORUCCIO, *the miller's man*, PEPA, ANTONIA, ROSALIA, *come rushing in.*

PEPA

Tell us pray, is it true?

ANTONIA

Is it really true?

ROSALIA

Tell us! Speak! Do answer!

PEPA

Do be quick and answer!

Is it true that Marta's marrying?

MORUCCIO

(Meanwhile laconically goes on emptying his sieve and refilling it with fresh corn.)

"If you wait till the church doors open You will see the bride."

PEPA

You're to answer what we ask! Don't you hear?

We want to know. . .

ROSALIA

Whether Marta?

ANTONIA

Means to wed.

PEPA

Is it really true?

ROSALIA

Or just a rumor?

ANTONIA

Or just a falsehood?

ALL THREE

Do be quick and tell us!

Answer! Quick! Your answer!

MORUCCIO (*as above*)

"If you wait till the church doors open You will see the bride."

PEPA

Ah! You're angry! 'Tis no wonder That Marta won't have you.

You would like to be the miller!

It is close upon a year

Since the miller went away.

But yet Marta won't take you.

ANTONIA and ROSALIA

Won't take you!

PEPA

You're too old, too ugly.

You're a crosspatch!

ANTONIA

Gruff and surly!

ROSALIA (*coaxingly*)

If we beg you very nicely,

You'll be kind and tell us, won't you?

MORUCCIO (*as before*)

"If you wait till the church doors open You will see the bride."

ANTONIA

You're the one who's waiting.

PEPA

Where is Marta?

ROSALIA

Yes, where is she?

ANTONIA

Is she in the mill?

MORUCCIO (*shrugs his shoulders*)

PEPA

Let him be, the surly fellow.

SCENE II

(The former. NURI who enters by the gate knitting a jersey. She remains standing on the threshold.)

NURI

Good evening!
All my chicks are roosting in the barn
at last
And are safe asleep.
May I come in?

ANTONIA

Yes, come in.

NURI

And you promise not to scold me
As you always do
When I come to see Marta?
She loves me well,
Better than you.

PEPA

Any news?

ANTONIA

What's the latest?

ROSALIA

Answer—speak and tell us!

NURI *(absent minded)*

Why, what can I have to tell you?

PEPA

Have you seen Tommaso?

NURI

Yes, I've been to see him,
And he told me lots of things.
Oh, so many, and so lovely!

THE THREE WOMEN

Well then, tell us what?

NURI

He said to me:
Look my child, all that you can see
Here as far as sight can reach,
Ev'rything belongs to our master,
To our lord Sebastiano.
The cottage where you dwell,
The mill beside the stream,
My cabin on the mountain side,

The manor-farm with turret and high
roof

Wherein our master lives,
All that, and all that is up on the
heights

And in the vale below,
Ev'rything belongs to our master
To our lord Sebastiano.

ANTONIA

Why there's nothing new in that!

PEPA

Things we've known since we were
children.

NURI

Wait a bit, I know some more—
He said to me:
If I journey, from today until
Tomorrow evening, walking, walking,
On and on without a stop,
All the fields and all the forests,
All the meadows which I see
Upon my journey,
All the rivers, all the brooklets,
Ev'ry waterfall,
Ev'rything belongs to our master
To our lord Sebastiano
And if I catch a butterfly,
At liberty I have to set it,
For it too belongs to our master.
And if a lizard runs across my path,
I've no right to chase it,
It belongs to our master.
The flowers which I'm gathering
Belong to him.
The bird that sings in the shady tree,
And the eagle that circles aloft,
They all are his.
Ev'rything belongs to our master
To our lord Sebastiano.

PEPA

All this we know quite well.

NURI

I didn't; I knew it not;
And Tommaso, who has just come
down
From his mountain home
He knows it all.

PEPA

And where is Tommaso now?

NURI

With the master he has climbed up
there,
High up there, where there are glaciers
Lying close beside the meadows.
'Tis a shepherd lad they fetch.
And the shepherd, think—just think—
He is coming—
This very day, is coming here
To wed our Marta.

THE WOMEN

Now at last, we've got the truth!

MORUCCIO

*(who has been going to and fro
and has heard all)*

To the devil with these gossips,
Now they've heard the news they
wanted!

ANTONIA

What, this evening? At whose com-
mand?

NURI

Whose command?
Why 'twas the master.
He commands and is obeyed.
He commanded the wedding
Of Marta and the shepherd.
(Importantly) Long ago I knew
That she belong'd to our master.
What that meant I did not know.

ANTONIA

What's that you say?

NURI

I say, what I heard one evening.

PEPA

Why did you never tell us?

NURI

I was ashamed to,
Can hardly tell you why.

THE WOMEN

Well, then, tell us, hurry, speak!

NURI

'Twas on a summer eve,
The moon had risen behind the wil-
lows,
And I lay resting there.
Well, along the pathway
Came Marta and the master.
I could hear that she was crying,

And I heard how she said:

"Yes, I know, too well I know
That I am yours!

Ne'er shall I escape from you!"

Oh, she sobbed so that I scarce
Could hear what she was saying.

Then the master said:

"And tho' you take another for your
husband

And tho' I take another wife,

I'll yet be thine for ever, ever thine!"

I heard it with my own ears.

She was crying and the master went
on whisp'ring.

But explain to me, what can it mean?

How can the master say to Marta

He belongs to her?

That she's his

Is quite simple,

For I know he owns us all.

But what could he mean by saying:

"I'm ever thine, still ever thine?"

PEPA

'Tis nought to you what he could mean
by it!

MORUCCIO

Be quiet, women, here she comes!

SCENE III

The above—MARTA

*(The WOMEN expect MARTA to enter
by the curtained door and keep their
eyes fixed on this. But she comes
from the mill and through the door
on the right. With drooping head
she advances to the center of the
stage without perceiving the WOMEN.
As soon, however, as she becomes
aware of their presence, she hurries
out through the curtained door.)*

NURI

Oh, she is gone.

PEPA

Marta, Marta, won't you hear?

Just to spite you we will come and see
your wedding.

ROSALIA

Can it be that she will dare,
How can she dare to marry?
Thus to enter holy wedlock?

*(Exit MORUCCIO through the
gate at the back)*

ANTONIA

And the duffer has no notion?
 What a donkey! What a ninny!
 No idea and thinks—ha, ha,
 Thinks that Marta—ha, ha, ha!

(All three laugh)

NURI

Tell me, pray, what makes you laugh?

PEPA

Surely weddings should be merry!

ROSALIA

More than ever *this* wedding!

ANTONIA

Ev'rybody will be laughing,
 When they hear what we've to tell
 them,
 That our Marta—ha, ha, ha!
 And the shepherd—ha, ha!
 What a duffer!

PEPA

And we all of us are coming
 As a bridal escort gay!

ROSALIA

Merry, merry we will make it!

MARTA

(*Appears in the door above on the
 left crying with vexation*)
 Oh, go away!
 I want nobody near me?

PEPA (*hypocritically*)

But, my dearie, pretty darling,
 Won't you tell us why!

ANTONIA

As we know it all already!

MARTA

Leave me, I tell you, leave me, go!

ROSALIA

Why, we only came here darling—

MARTA

Go, I tell you, hurry, quick!
 (*The WOMEN do not stir. MARTA
 seizes their baskets which they had
 set down on the ground and throws
 them out of the gate.*)

Out with them and with you!

PEPA

Holy Mother, give us help.

(Exeunt all the WOMEN)

NURI

And I, must I go also, Marta?
 I'm your little Nuri.

MARTA (*tenderly*)

You dearie, Nuri, my child?
 Come, kiss me dear.

NURI

Why your cheeks are wet with tears.

MARTA

No, no.

NURI

Do be merry!

MARTA

Oh, for the merry heart
 That was mine when a child!
 Nevermore shall I be glad!
 Nevermore shall I be merry!

NURI

'Tis your wedding, is it not?

MARTA (*bitterly*)

'Tis my wedding . . . Yes, that is
 so.
 Why was I not faithful to my "No"?
 It is madness, it is wicked, this mar-
 riage.
 How unhappy my lot is!
 None to help me, none to give me aid!

NURI

I'll stand by you, Marta,
 I am with you.

MARTA (*without hearing her*)

No one brings me aid in my sore need!
 And this Pedro, how I hate him!
 He my husband?
 No, rather will I die!
 Peace I pray for!
 Nought but peace I pray for!

(A voice is heard outside)

Go, my child, that is Sebastiano.
 If he sees me weeping
 He'll beat me I fear.

NURI

That he shall not!

MARTA

Would you prevent him?
If I were but sure
That he would kill me,
I'd be weeping, weeping till . . .

NURI

How you puzzle me!
Who dare do any harm to you?

MARTA

Go, my love, and ask no more—
(*Pushes NURI out*)

SCENE IV

MARTA (*alone*)

His am I, his!
His property!
Now and ever!
Oh, that he had cast me off!
Now, I shall ne'er escape from him,
Never again be free!
Holy Mother of our sorrows!
Wherefore am I punished so?
Was I sinful, was I bad?
His am I, his, his property.
Why this torment?
Why this suff'ring?
Ah, I'm but a girl and weak,
And I wandered by the stream,
Had not strength to take the plunge.
Free it would have made me—free in
death!
Ah, but I was weak and frail!
My resistance melts away before his
word!
His am I, his! His property!
Holy Mother, Virgin Mary,
Help me in my hour of need!

(*A noise from without*)

Can they be coming to fetch me?
Can it be that lout,
May heaven curse him!
I will not see him!

(*Exits quickly into her room*)

SCENE V

Outside before the open gate

THE PEASANTS

He's here!

NURI

Where? Show me where?

PEPA

Why, down the hill, can you not see?

ROSALIA

The bridegroom!

ANTONIA

The bridegroom!

(*All laugh and hurry off
towards the left*)

MORUCCIO (*draws TOMMASO
into the center*)

Here, Tommaso, a word!

TOMMASO

What is it, friend?

MORUCCIO

Is this the first time that you have
come hither?

TOMMASO

The first, indeed my son—
The mountain's lofty summit is my
home,
And in this vale I never yet set foot.

MORUCCIO

But Sebastiano our master, him you
know?

TOMMASO

A righteous master, a noble lord,
God prosper him!

MORUCCIO

Why then you do not know?

TOMMASO

Know what? Explain!

MORUCCIO

There's but one point to settle.
Whether Pedro is a wicked man
Or just a simple fool.

TOMMASO

What is your meaning?
Ah, I take you now!
This Marta has slipped thro' your
hands?
You wanted her yourself?

MORUCCIO

The Lord preserve me!

TOMMASO

Explain yourself then.

MORUCCIO

That is quickly done. (*He sits down*)
She and her father came as beggars to
these parts. . . .

The devil knows whether he was her
father—

A lovely child, there's no denying.
Our lord and master said so too, lord
Sebastiano.

This mill he gave into the charge of
the old rascal.

To please the pretty daughter,

And he and Marta—

The rest you can supply yourself.

TOMMASO

That is a falsehood! Must be false I
say!

MORUCCIO

Nay, let me finish first.

'Tis well that you should learn

Why he has got a husband for her
now:

He's badly off, is lord Sebastiano.

The noble lord has debts—

He knows not where to turn—

The bailiffs press,

And his estate goes to the dogs

Unless some help be found.

This help a wealthy wife—

Alone can bring him.

But he can't get a wife till he has

Silenced all the gossip in the neighbor-
hood.

The time has come when he must break
with Marta.

The world demands it.

And therefore, as you see,

His Marta has to wed this fool.

TOMMASO (*rises*)

That is a falsehood.

MORUCCIO

Find me a man down here

Who does not know it!

TOMMASO

I won't believe—

MORUCCIO

If you're an honest man, you must de-
spise

All three as I do.

TOMMASO

Despicable rogue!

MORUCCIO

Well, then, I see you're not an honest
man.

(*As they are both on the point of as-
saulting each other with their sticks,
the noise of the crowd outside is
heard and they pause.*)

SCENE VI

(PEDRO, MORUCCIO, NURI, ANTONIA,
ROSALIA, PEPA, MEN and WOMEN,
noise and crowd. The dusk gradu-
ally deepens into night.)

PEPA (*outside the gate*)

He's coming, hurry!

ROSALIA

Pedro comes.

ANTONIA

The bridegroom.

SEVERAL VOICES

Long life to him!

PEDRO (*in the gateway*)

Yes, yes, here I am.

Like a chamois fleet down from the
mountain

I bounded here.

Here I am!

But where is she?

Where is my sweetheart, my bride?

PEPA (*calling*)

Marta! Marta!

ANTONIA

Won't you come out? Your bride-
groom has arrived.

PEDRO

(*They all crowd laughingly
around him*)

O Lord Almighty! All these people!

And all the people here are merry;

One might imagine the whole lot were
marrying!

Do you know Marta?

Of course! She is pretty, is she not?

PEPA (*ironically*)

Pretty and fresh!

ANTONIA

Fresh as a rosebud!

ROSALIA

I wish you ev'ry joy!

PEDRO

I thank you all.

I scarce can think it true,

That such good luck is mine.

Why just think! She will be my wife!

Before my eyes, bright as a rainbow
vision, the world is dancing.

With happiness my heart will burst.

Marta is mine, my wife this very day.

TOMMASO (*to MORUCCIO*)How could you imagine that Sebastia-
no? . . .

MORUCCIO

If you're curious to know, just ask him.

Your lord Sebastiano. Look, he's
coming now.

SCENE VII

(*The above. SEBASTIANO—afterwards
MARTA, NURI, ROSALIA, ANTONIA,
PEPA.*)

NURI

The master's coming! Our owner and
master.(*Enter SEBASTIANO*)

SEBASTIANO

Has Pedro not arrived?

PEDRO

Yes, here I am; I'm here, my lord!
Let me kiss your hands most humbly.

SEBASTIANO

No, no! And where is Marta?

PEPA

In her chamber, master.

SEBASTIANO

Then go and fetch her out.

(*PEPA off to the left*)SEBASTIANO (*to PEDRO*)To ev'rything I've seen, the priest is on
his way.And in an hour you will be man and
wife—A vow, a blessing, and the thing is
over.

PEDRO

O master, sir, how can I ever thank
you?PEPA (*coming back from MARTA'S
room*)She'll soon be coming, Marta bids me
tell you.

SEBASTIANO

What's that you tell me? Soon she'll
be coming?Without delay she must be here when
I am calling.(*He goes to the foot of the
stairs and calls up*)

Marta!

TOMMASO (*following him*)

Sir, I would speak with you.

There's something weighing heavily on
my mind.

SEBASTIANO

What do I care what's weighing on
your mind?
Another time.

TOMMASO

To save my peace of mind! Let it be
now.(*At this moment MARTA appears at
the head of the stairs*)

SEBASTIANO

At last, then. (*Vexed, to TOMMASO.*)
Later, later!MARTA (*coming down*)

I'm here, my lord, at your command!

(*She comes quite close to
SEBASTIANO, softly*)Oh, spare me this! Oh, for the love
of heav'n

Have pity on my misery!

SEBASTIANO (*aloud*)

You are not merry, Marta!

Look at your Pedro now; he knows
when he is lucky!

NURI

Oh, look, poor Marta's crying.

THE WOMEN

She's crying, unhappy child.

MARTA

(Quickly wiping away the tears)

Who says so? Who? Who saw me crying?

The master commands — and I am merry.

Look! I'm laughing.

PEDRO

That is all right. There's nothing merrier

Than a wedding. Eh, good people?

(They all laugh. To MARTA)

How ev'ryone rejoices in our joy!

You only have not said a word to me.

A single word! Speak to me then!

MARTA

We must be going.

SEBASTIANO *(pointing to PEDRO's coat)*

Who ever saw a bridegroom

In rags and tatters and in ribbons?

I've ordered a garment for you, lad.

You must look smart and well attir'd.

An elegant young man, a dandy you shall be.

'Tis fitting surely for a bridegroom.

THE MEN *(laughing)*

An elegant young man

THE WOMEN

A dandy!

PEDRO

A dandy? What is that?

ROSALIA

A dandy is a fop.

PEDRO

What is a fop?

(All laugh louder)

Do you laugh at me?

I don't advise it!

With these good fists I'll go for any fellow who will dare.

(He seizes hold of a lad)

What is a fop? I ask you!

(The WOMEN shriek. It looks as if there were going to be a big fight)

MARTA

The lazy cowards! They let this yokel give them all a beating.

SEBASTIANO

Pedro!

PEDRO

(Suddenly calming down. The excitement ceases)

Why I had almost lost my temper.

SEBASTIANO

Go and put on your new garments, and get you ready,

I see the priest approaching.

PEDRO

You come along, help to adorn me;

We will be merry and laugh today—

Is it not my wedding day, my happy day?

Let us be glad!

*(Exeunt the MEN, with PEDRO on the right)*PEPA *(to the WOMEN)*

Come with me. We'll watch from here.

THE WOMEN

We'll watch from here.

*(Exeunt through the gate. At this moment the PRIEST appears in the gateway. The WOMEN curtesy reverently.)*TOMMASO *(to SEBASTIANO)*

I want to speak to you; 'tis most important.

SEBASTIANO *(impatiently)*

Well, wait for us out there, if it's so pressing,

I'll come at once.

TOMMASO

I shall await you, sir.

*(Exit)**(The PRIEST has advanced and is now standing in front of SEBASTIANO)*

SEBASTIANO

Reverend sir, you come to fetch the bridal pair.

I have to see the bride a moment.

Go in advance and I will send the happy couple on.

As soon as they have reached the chapel, proceed

And do not wait my coming.

Join them together. May heaven send blessings

On their union.

(Exit the PRIEST)

SCENE VIII

MARTA, SEBASTIANO

(During the whole last scene MARTA has been sitting apathetically on a millstone in the background. Now that the stage is empty, SEBASTIANO looks at her in silence for a moment.)

SEBASTIANO

Marta!

MARTA

Do with me what you will, but spare me this,
Don't give me to this fellow.

SEBASTIANO (*derisively*)

Another man might suit you better!
An elegant soft-spoken gentleman,
Who warbles sweet songs with sentimental grimaces!
And of me you would fain be rid.

Have I not guessed it?
Forgotten are the benefits I lavish'd on you,
This is the thanks for my devotion!

(*He wants to caress her, but she turns away with repugnance*)

You know me not. I will not stand defiance,
Mine now—mine always!
And no other will you dare to have but mine!

Come here! Come here, do you hear?
(*He makes a threatening gesture. When he sees that she is going to obey his order, he bursts out laughing.*)

Tell me, my child, Pedro fills you with horror.

MARTA

I cannot tell you with what horror.

SEBASTIANO

That is all right, just as I want it.
All is going just as I wished it.
Would I tolerate this marriage, think you,
If you like the bridegroom?

MARTA

Oh, can there be a man so vile
Who knows what I am and yet takes me!
You paid him for this, the scoundrel—

Shame on him! (*Collapsing at the table*)

Shame on me!

(*Loud laughter heard outside*)SEBASTIANO (*with restrained ardor*)

Your love will soon make amends for all,
Your love for me! Is that not so?

MARTA

Leave me, for you frighten me!

SEBASTIANO

You know it, Marta, you know it well,
I love nothing in the world but you—
Leave you I never will,
And if I give you to another man,
'Tis merely done because I must.
My affection, my joy—harsh gossip
looks askance at it!
To silence evil tongues you'll marry
Pedro—and all remains unaltered!
For mine you are, and I will never
leave you!

I love you now and I will always love you!

I long for you and cannot live without you.

I claim you mine, and you shall not escape.

MARTA

I'm frightened of you, sir.

SEBASTIANO

You're not to be afraid; you are to love me!

MARTA (*repulsing him*)

Sebastiano!

SEBASTIANO

You know me not! Take care, you know me not!

I suffer no resistance, for none have dared to cross me.

(*Loud laughter heard outside*)

Then you will go to church?

MARTA

Yes.

SEBASTIANO

And you will marry Pedro?

MARTA

Yes.

SEBASTIANO

And still me mine?

MARTA (*shrinking away from him*)
No, no!
(*Renewed laughter outside*)

MARTA *involuntarily seeks refuge*
close to SEBASTIANO)
Hark, they're coming now,
They're coming now to fetch me!

SEBASTIANO (*laughs triumphantly*)
That is right, that does me good,
From him—you fly to me!

SCENE IX

ROSALIA, ANTONIA, PEPA, NURI, MEN
and WOMEN *come on—afterwards*
TOMMASO

THE MEN

He will not be a fop!

THE WOMEN

He will not wear the clothes you gave
him.

PEDRO

You shall not make a dressed up fool
of me!

Let him who likes put on this fin'ry,
I won't. My shabby jacket here suits
me far better.

SEBASTIANO

Well, as you like. You can be wed
just as you are.
Marta, take your mantilla.

MARTA

Yes, sir, I am quite ready.
(*Softly to SEBASTIANO*)
And all is o'er between us two.

SEBASTIANO (*softly to MARTA*)
Really? You'll find you're wrong.
Tonight I'm coming to you.
If in your room you see a light
You'll know I am there.

NURI

Here, Marta, your mantilla.
(*TOMMASO comes in by the gate*)

MARTA

'Tis you, Nuri, my little friend,
Who brings me my mantilla.

NURI

Oh, say, Marta, you love me now
And always will.

MARTA

Yes, my child.
(*To SEBASTIANO*)
Look here, a child, an innocent child,
like Nuri
I was once myself.
Thus to this mill I once came hither.

SEBASTIANO (*shrugs his shoulders*)
Come on to the chapel.
(*Outside, before the gate, which is*
wide open, the procession begins to
form. Some MEN carry torches.
MARTA, leaning on NURI, goes to-
wards the exit, where PEDRO is
awaiting her. MEN and WOMEN
crowd after her.)

TOMMASO (*to SEBASTIANO*)

I must speak to you, sir;
They must not marry
Until you have answered my question.

SEBASTIANO (*to TOMMASO*)

What is it that you want of me?
(*To the departing people*)

Go, friends, go; I'll follow on.
(*Clearing the way in the*
background)

PEDRO

Ohe! Off with you!
Hi, there! my lambkins, make way.
Let me walk beside my Marta, please!
Now, then, hi!

(*Amidst laughter and jodeling*
they all go off in disorder)

SCENE X

SEBASTIANO, TOMMASO, MORUCCIO

SEBASTIANO

Well, what is it, Moruccio?
Are you not going to the church?

MORUCCIO

No pow'r on earth shall make me go.

SEBASTIANO

Why ever not? Your reason—

MORUCCIO

I will not; that must satisfy you.

SEBASTIANO

Then let it satisfy you if I tell you,
Pack your bundle and be off!

MORUCCIO

Right gladly, too.

(He goes to the background, where he spreads out his manta, a sort of shawl with a colored pattern, collects his tools, which are scattered about the stage, and lays them in it.)

SEBASTIANO *(to TOMMASO)*

And now for you!

TOMMASO

Such curious rumors came to my ears
Of you and Marta, and I can't believe
them.

Why, it would be dishonest to poor
Pedro,

Who has no notion what the folk are
saying.

SEBASTIANO

Why do you stop to listen to silly
rumors?

The people gossip, let them gossip.
No word of all they say is true.

TOMMASO *(clenching his fist at
MORUCCIO)*

I thought as much, you vagabond,
You scamp, you liar!

SEBASTIANO

He told you that? Be off, scoundrel!
Outside with you, or you will rue it!
I'll have you hounded like a dog from
out the country.

MORUCCIO

*(ready to start, scans him from
head to foot)*

Me? Just let me see if you would
dare!

TOMMASO

How can you dare speak so to your
master?

MORUCCIO

My master? He's that no more—
I would that he had never been it.

SEBASTIANO

Be off!

MORUCCIO

I'm going now. But ere I go,
Let me repeat the honest truth before
Tommaso,
That he may know, which of us two is
the liar here.

'Tis you that lie! Think you I did not
see

How ev'ry night you stole to Marta's
room?

Think you I do not know

Why you are forcing Marta

To take this fool as husband?

The truth I'm speaking. See! I lift up
my hand,

And swear it by the soul of my dead
mother,

That 'tis the truth I'm speaking.

Your mother, too, lies in her grave.

Then, swear as I do,

If you dare!

SEBASTIANO

Heed not his words!

TOMMASO

Holy Virgin, help!

I see it now,

It may not be!

I'll hasten to the chapel,

And I'll say. No!

*(At this moment the chapel
bells begin to peal)*

The bells are ringing.

Oh, it is too late!

(To SEBASTIANO)

Oh, what have you done?

What have you done?

SEBASTIANO

What's done is past undoing,

So calm yourself and—good night.
(Exit)

TOMMASO

O my God, forgive me for this unin-
tended infamy!

MORUCCIO

(Tapping him on the shoulder)

I'm going, will you come? I'm going
up.

Up to my mountains I'm returning,

Where I can see the sky and grassy
meadows,

Far, far from people. Will you come?

TOMMASO

Oh, would that Pedro never had come
hither!

MORUCCIO *(in the gateway)*

Will you come?

*(From afar the procession is heard
approaching with cries of "Long
live the happy pair.")*

TOMMASO

Oh, what disgrace and scandal!
I cannot see them,
I cannot, will not! Hence!

(Both go off)

SCENE XI

(The stage remains empty a moment, then the procession is heard approaching. MARTA comes on the stage. PEDRO remains standing in the gateway, waving farewells to the passers-by.)

PEDRO

The wedding day is o'er.
Good comrades, get you home!
Farewell! Let ev'ry sheep rest in its
fold! Good night!
Now run away! Be gone!
This way the ewes, that way the rams!
Hi! How they're swarming down the
hill!

A VOICE FROM OUTSIDE

Make fast the gate and lock yourselves
in! Sleep well!
(Loud laughter outside, the
voices die away)

PEDRO (calling after them)

May heaven be with you.
(He locks the gate and comes to the
front. MARTA is sitting with bowed
head at the table.)

PEDRO

The gate is closed—
We are alone—
Now speak to me, just one word,
Marta, my love,
Ah, I know a better word than that!
Marta, my wife.

MARTA

What is it? Leave me alone—

PEDRO

Why, what is wrong?
Come here, sit by my side!
(He sits down on the ground
and laughs)

Now let us be cosy.
(He coaxes her, as shepherds coax
their sheep, and then laughs to him-
self in childlike glee.)

I'm waiting, come!

MARTA (remains sitting motionless)

Leave me!

PEDRO

Listen, sweetheart, even if I am but
rough,
You are not gracious.
Wait a minute, I will punish you.
I had something to tell you, and now
I shall not—

(He stands behind her and collects
money from his pockets. Then he
fetches out a little handkerchief from
his breast-pocket containing some
silver coins.)

(To himself)

I have a little present to surprise her!
'Tis nice and heavy!

(He softly draws close to MARTA and
laughs quietly to himself. When he
is close behind her, he touches her
head and her shoulder with one fin-
ger, and imitates the cuckoo.)

Cuckoo!

MARTA (shrinks back startled)

How could you? Is that your idea of
joking?

PEDRO (laughing)

Do not be cross!
(He has taken the silver coins from
his handkerchief and now stands,
holding them awkwardly in his
hands.)

Give me your hand a moment.
(Pause. She takes no notice)

Marta, your hand!
(He offers her the money)

MARTA

(Takes no notice whatever of his hand
and crosses over to the other side)
Stop all this nonsense! I am not in
the mood for laughing.
It is late, 'tis bed time, Pedro.

PEDRO

You self-willed child! What can I do?
(He spreads out the handkerchief
on the ground)

Look here, this is a dollar,
The first I ever earned myself.
And that's my blood. Ha, ha!
(He laughs)

The master, lord Sebastiano, the noble
lord,
Gave me this dollar.
God's blessing on the worthy man.
Do take the dollar then! Don't be
afraid!
'Tis money fairly earned.

MARTA

*(Motions away his hand, but this
time without repugnance)*

No, no, I will not.

PEDRO

You think perhaps I earned it easily?
My life I ventured for it, yes, my life!
For ev'ry night a cruel wolf attacked
our fold

And captured a lambkin,
Our finest dog he mangled,
It almost drove me crazy!
I was furious, ill, and nigh despairing;
To myself I said:

That wolf I'll do for, and if I die for't!
So I lie down one night
And hide myself in the boulders
And wait for him.
The grizzly thief, the wicked wolf
He was not to escape me—

(MARTA begins to pay attention)

So there I lay on the alert,
Quite hidden in my corner—
The hours passed by, and o'er my head
The stars began to vanish.
And from the snowfield
I heard the water dripping,
Then ev'rything was still, quite still.
A sudden rushing in the grass,
A sudden leap close o'er my head,
And it is gone.

I felt a burning breath upon my neck,
That was the wolf.

The sheepdog barks, the lambs start
bleating,

I jump up and draw my knife,
And as I stand with weapon ready
I see good master wolf trot by.

—The grizzly thief, the wicked wolf,—
A bleeding lamb in his mouth.

Now swift as thought I spring at the
beast,

My knife is in his heart.

What happened then, I really hardly
know.

I held him closely locked as he did me.
He bellowed and I yelled.

I hit him and I felt
How his pointed teeth were tearing my
flesh to pieces.
Thus locked together down the hill we
roll,
A shapeless raging bundle,
Two savage wild beasts
Who fight for their lives in frenzy. . .
And so we roll together in the torrent.

*(MARTA listens with growing
interest)*

They brought me home into my cabin,
Attended to my wounds—

There did I lie for many weeks
In sorry pligh..

At last one day, when in the sunshine
I was sitting

The master climb'd the hill to visit me
And he gave me this dollar.

And when I was about to kiss his hand,
Out of my scarcely healed-up wound
My blood welled forth, and dyed the
dollar red.

That silver piece was hardly earned not
so?

MARTA *(touched)*

'Tis growing late. To rest we now
must go.

PEDRO

Then take the money, I give it you—

MARTA

No, no, indeed I can't.

And now, good night!

This is the way to *your* room—go—
(She points to the right)

PEDRO

The way to *my* room?

'Tis your turn to joke?

The way to *our* room must be there.
(He points to the left)

MARTA

'Tis not a joke, leave me alone.

PEDRO

You wish. . . that I. . .

You really mean it?

MARTA *(in confusion)*

Oh, force me not to speak,

Else I must tell you

The load that on my heart is weighing;

I will be silent, or else I must tell you

How you have treated me. You know
it well:

Vile it was, and shameful?

PERDO (*nonplussed*)

What's that you say? Whatever have I done?

And by what right do you speak so to me?

What do you say I know?

MARTA (*full of shame*)

What they told you.

PEDRO

Told me? They told me nothing!

MARTA

Am I to be disgraced and forced to repeat it?

For you must know it,
You must know what you did
When you agreed to marry me.

PEDRO

What I did? Why yes, I know it well—

When Love called me, I ran to seize it!
And I will hold it, and will prize it
As long as breath and life remain!
There's nought I love on earth but only you!

And this shall be my only care:
Your happiness, your happiness!
(*At this moment a light appears behind the curtain which conceals MARTA'S door.*)

MARTA (*horror-struck*)

O, Holy Virgin, lend me aid!
He dares to come.

PEDRO (*surprised*)

A light? Within your room a light?
We are not alone!

MARTA (*tries to conceal her terror*)
No one is here.

PEDRO

And I tell you, I am not mistaken.
(*He looks in his pocket for his knife, and goes towards the door*)

MARTA (*stops him*)

No one is there—The light inside my chamber—
I myself have lighted.

PEDRO

That cannot be—It was not there
When we came here this evening.
(*The light disappears*)
See, 'tis extinguished now.

MARTA

You're dazed, or you are dreaming.

PEDRO

Did you not say yourself just now
There was a light within your room?
Now it is gone.

MARTA

You dream, for I saw nothing there.

PEDRO

You saw no light?

MARTA

No, I repeat, you must have dreamed;
There was no light within my chamber.

PEDRO (*looking at her doubtfully*)
I'm dreaming it?

MARTA (*to herself*)
How dare he this evening?

PEDRO (*confused to himself*)
I did not see a light?
It was a dream?

MARTA

(*Sits down on a chair, and rests her chin on the back of it*)
I mean to spend the night in here.
(*Pointing to the door on the right*)

I told you once before, 'tis bedtime.

PEDRO

I heard you. My room on that side—
And yours— But I'm not going yet.
(*He sits down on the ground, and gradually stretches himself out*)

MARTA (*to herself*)

My throbbing head is all confused—
(*In great distress*)
Heartless he was always, and cruel,
But ne'er would I have thought
That he could be so wicked.

(*Dejectedly*)

And this unhappy lad, he thinks I do
not see
Or notice him at all.

PEDRO

(Sadly, almost in tears, but resigned)
 What shall I do? I cannot tell.
 Ah, well, I'll wait! I'll think I am
 Sleeping up there on the mountain.
 I shall be near to you at least.

*(He creeps unobserved close
 to MARTA)*

And now one Paternoster
 For my beloved parents,
 Who are up in heaven
 With God.
 Tonight the second Paternoster I will
 not say,
 For a wife I have at last,
 Whom heav'n has sent to me.

MARTA

Have pity, Lord Almighty,
 How fearful is Thy punishment!

PEDRO *(half asleep)*

Rest all around us. Peace ev'rywhere—
 The wolf won't come tonight. No—
 no—

*(As he is moving his lips in his sleep,
 as though to speak, the curtain slowly
 falls.)*

ACT II

The same scene of action as in Act I

SCENE I

*(MARTA and PEDRO are sitting in the
 same position as at the end of Act
 I. Dawn.)*

NURI *(behind the scenes)*

The stars have gone to their rest.
 For they must sleep awhile.
 Dawn greets the world with a smile.

*(MARTA has awakened. She glances
 at PEDRO, who is still asleep, and
 then goes to the back. She busies
 herself in the house, and then disap-
 pears, during NURI's song, into her
 room.)*

NURI *(continuing)*

Hearts must be light and gay
 When sunshine gilds the day.
 The world is brave, the world is fair,
 The sun with happiness fills the air.
 I wish I could kiss ev'ry golden ray.
 But kiss it, nay, 'tis too far away—

It is so far, and I am so small—
 A poor little maiden after all.

*(With the last words NURI enters by
 the middle door. She is knitting a
 woolen jersey.)*

Good morrow, Pedro!

PEDRO *(awaking)*

Marta!

NURI *(laughing)*

'Tis not your Marta,
 Only I.

PEDRO

And where is Marta!

NURI

Why ask of me?
 Are you not Marta's husband?
 And have been so since yester evening!

PEDRO *(bitterly)*

Since yester evening!

NURI

I'm knitting you a pretty woolen
 jacket
 For yours is so grey and shabby—

PEDRO

No use, my child, for I shall never
 wear it,
 Before you've finished it, I shall be far.

NURI *(in alarm)*

Far, Pedro?

PEDRO

Yes, far away from Marta. It drives
 me mad.

Who lit that light within her chamber?
 Ah, who?

I want to kill him! I shall not rest
 Until I've plunged my knife into his
 craven body!

NURI

Why, what's the matter?

PEDRO *(recollecting himself)*

Forgive me, child!

NURI

Have you been hurt?

*(Pedro shakes his head
 negatively)*

I know quite well what's hurting you.
 Is Marta not kind to you?
 And are they all laughing?

PEDRO

Are they all laughing?

NURI

They all are saying: "Oh, that poor Pedro"

And laughing and tittering.

I wonder why?

PEDRO

Yes, why? Ah, why?

They all know my dishonour——

But I, I know not who it was.

Oh, why did I come down?

Come down from my dear mountains

Where I dwelt contented?

NURI

You make me sad!

What can I do to help you?

I like you so. Can I not comfort you?

PEDRO

(Stroking her hair)

My pretty child!

SCENE II

PEDRO, NURI, MARTA

NURI

Here is Marta. I must be going.

PEDRO

No, don't go—stay awhile.

MARTA *(to herself)*

What can he want with Nuri?

What can he have to say?

He surely can't admire——

(She goes to the hearth and pokes the fire, over which a pot is hanging)

Stupid fire, won't you burn up brighter?——

What are they talking about? . . .

They shall not! Shall not!

NURI *(going up to MARTA)*

What news this morning?

MARTA

O, Nuri, you shall have the latest news:

I've seen enough of you!

Be off, out of this house!—

NURI

Do you hear that, Pedro?

Marta turns me out.

I wished to help her.

MARTA

I want no help—Begone, or I'll drive you out!

NURI

Whatever have I done?

MARTA

I do not want to see you!

NURI

I shall not go till Pedro says I must,
He is the master here.

MARTA

Well, then, let Pedro say it also.

PEDRO

Go then, and do as Marta says,

For here I count for nothing,

Be good, my child, and go.

MARTA

No, stay awhile, I want you, after all.

NURI *(crying)*

What shall I do?

PEDRO

Best go my child,

And I am coming with you.

MARTA

No; that you sha'n't!

You stay with me.

For you . . .

*(Breaks off, for he has stopped short
and is gazing at her very straight)*

PEDRO

For I?

MARTA *(in confusion)*

I know not, cannot tell.

*(She sinks crying on to a chair)*PEDRO *(sarcastically)*

Do you believe that Marta's crying?

Not in the least! Just the reverse,
she's laughing!

How we have both laughed since yesterday,

Since our wedding day.

*(He puts his arm around NURI
and leads her away)*

Then come, my little girl, and follow me,

And ne'er come to this house again.

What would you here?

Here dwells misfortune.

Here dwell we—

(Exit with NURI)

MARTA (*after them; bursts out suddenly*)

He shall not speak to Nuri!
He shall not go with her!
Is he not mine?
And none shall rob me of my Pedro!
(*As she is hurrying to the gate she runs into TOMMASO*)

SCENE III

MARTA, TOMMASO

TOMMASO

Whither so fast?

MARTA

I do not know! Indeed I do not know!

TOMMASO

I just met Pedro and he seemed
Quite desperate.

MARTA

Quite desperate!

TOMMASO

The people laugh and he cannot tell why.
They mock at him and he can see no reason—
They're all aware of his dishonor,
But he alone has got no clue—
But he will ask me: Who, ah who is the man?
Who can it be? For I will kill him!
And I, I was the sponsor of this marriage.
Oh how I hate you! I could beat you!

MARTA

Then do!

TOMMASO

I know now what you are. You are a—

MARTA

No, you may beat me, not revile me.
Tell me, Tommaso, had you not a child?

TOMMASO

I had a child. She is in heaven now.

MARTA

Think of your daughter ere you judge me harshly!
Had you died first and left her,

Friendless and unprotected in a wicked world,

In want and mis'ry, who would give her help?

O, God Almighty! take pity on me,
And let me come unto Thee!

Only Thou canst save me,
Only Thou canst redeem me!

(*She sinks weeping on to a chair*)

TOMMASO

You're crying? And your tears are genuine?

MARTA

Ah, let me tell you how it all came.
The truth I speak, the plain unvarnished truth!
Will you hear me?

TOMMASO

Speak on.

MARTA

I know not who my father was.
I never saw or heard of him.
My mother begged for alms in Barcelona,
In summer heat and winter snow-storm.
I stood with her, for she was blind,
Outside the church doors and at busy corners.
She never spoke. With begging outstretched hand
She just stood there, while I clung to her skirts
And cried from utter weariness and hunger.
And then one day there came a man to us, a lame old cripple.
Then we stood and begged all three.
My mother and the cripple
Would often fight and quarrel
All thro' the weary night.
Oh what a life of wretched shame was mine!
Then came a night when all was strangely still
Dumb on the ground was mother lying.
Dumb sat the cripple by her side.
But in the morning he got up
And said to me: "She is dead."
His words I did not understand,
But long years after I understood what I had lost.

TOMMASO

And then what happened?

MARTA

From Barcelona day by day we wandered
Through the plains from place to place.
And I grew up. How willingly
Would I have sought for work!
But still the cripple held me captive
Because my dancing drew the folk together
And used to make them stare and
throw me money.
He was contented. And what did he
care.
If thro' the weary nights I lay weeping.

TOMMASO

Unhappy child!

MARTA

And so one day our wand'rings led me
hither.
I danced before the peasants
And the old man went about and
passed his hat for money.
And then a man came up, the people
called him master.
'Twas Sebastiano. He stroked my
glossy hair
And bade me tell him how it happened
That I had grown so pretty.
And where I learnt to dance?
'Twas he who spoke the first kind
words I heard.
And then the master saw the cripple,
And asked him whether he would like
to stay here.
And take the post of miller.
I pleaded with my eyes: No need to
beg again.
No need to dance to keep ourselves
from starving!
The cripple then whispered to Sebastiano.
They bargained and they haggled—and
we stayed.
I then was fourteen years of age.
And Sebastiano came here daily,
He brought me costly presents, begged
and threatened,
The old man beat me, even tore my
hair out.
Unless I yielded to the master,
Our peace and comfort would be over,
Once more a life of begging and of
dancing.
No, no, no! And that is how I fell.

x

TOMMASO

You poor unfortunate!

MARTA

Yes unfortunate, but not bad!

TOMMASO

God punish Sebastiano!

MARTA

My life was wretched, I was fettered
By my disgrace.
The master made me marry Pedro.
I vowed I never would,
But how could I, a poor young thing
Defy the master?

TOMMASO

And I, alas, assisted him!

MARTA

A marvel occurred:
While we were in the chapel, I seemed
to hear
A message from above: This is your
mate,
Your rock and shield, and he will save
you
From all your grief and pain.
And Pedro . . . Pedro loves me,
He loves me truly, tho' I am unworthy.

TOMMASO

And Pedro does not know,
But soon will learn your story, and
then will despise you—

MARTA

Despise me you say? He may!
Since I am certain that he loves me!
As certain as I am that I too love him!
Yes, now I know it.
And all the world may hear it!
My heart will overflow.
Just as the torrent melts the ice in
spring,
Love's mighty torrent thro' my heart
is surging.
I love him, Tommaso, hark to me!
And he may beat me, he may kill me,
And make me suffer as he will.
I love him, he is mine and I am his—

TOMMASO

Nay, if you love him, you have but
one course,
The truth you have to tell him.

MARTA

I am to tell him? To confess my
shame to Pedro?
And if he goes? Suppose that I
should lose him?

TOMMASO

He must be told it! Must be told by
you!
Enough of falsehood! Have the
strength to tell him!

MARTA

Then pray for me!

TOMMASO

That I will do!
I will pray heav'n to grant you per-
fect strength
To go through this ordeal. Have faith
in God

Who helpeth all. He worketh wonders
Thro' the pow'r of love.

MARTA (*kneeling down before him*)
Then bless me.

TOMMASO

The Lord enfold you in His arms,
His ever-loving arms,
And give you courage, faith and
strength,
For He is merciful.
Have faith in Him and you are strong.
Look up to Him
And in His mercy place your hope!

(*Voices, laughter and chattering
heard in the background*)

MARTA

O here is Nuri together with the
women.
I don't want to see them—Farewell.
(*Off*)

SCENE IV

TOMMASO, ROSALIA, ANTONIA,
PEPA, NURI

PEPA

There is Tommaso, he must tell us.

ANTONIA

Where is Marta? Where is Pedro?

ROSALIA

Do tell us what took place.

TOMMASO

I do not know.

PEPA

He wants to go.

(*Detaining him*)

Oh, can't you wait a moment?

TOMMASO

Peace be with you all!

(*Exit*)

ANTONIA

The mean old crosspatch, he will not
tell us.

NURI

He does not know, but I know all.

ALL THREE WOMEN (*together*)

O darling Nuri, dearest, sweetest child
Do tell us all—do say, what has oc-
curred?

NURI (*laughing*)

Don't make a noise, for Pedro's com-
ing;

If you are so curious
Ask him yourselves.

SCENE V

The above (Enter PEDRO)

(*All retire to the back, PEDRO comes
forward and sits down*)

PEPA

What, so sullen, so dejected!

ROSALIA

The morning after the wedding!

ANTONIA

No civil word for us?

PEDRO

What want you here?

THE THREE WOMEN

We bring you corn to grind.
Is there water in the basin, and is the
wheel at work?

PEDRO

Set down your baskets there,
And I will see your corn is ground.

PEPA

You're looking ill.

ANTONIA

Are you ill?

ROSALIA

Are you not well?

PEDRO

What's that to do with you?

ANTONIA

But where is Marta?

PEDRO

That's no concern of yours!

ROSALIA

Mayn't one inquire how Marta is
The day after the wedding?
(*They all three laugh*)

PEDRO

Why the devil are you laughing?

PEPA

We're not laughing at all.

ANTONIA (*laughing*)

No, nobody has laughed.

PEDRO

I won't stand it any longer,
I'll force you to speak!
Stop your laughing, once for all!
(*He catches hold of PEPA*)
You speak for all!
You laughed last night, and laughed
today.

What have I done to you?

And what has Marta?

(*He shakes her with both arms. The
WOMEN shriek. PEPA tears herself
free. PEDRO seizes ROSALIA.*)

You are to answer me, you shameless
woman!

ROSALIA

You are a fool!

(*PEDRO seizes her by the throat*)

PEDRO

A fool am I? Yes, you are right!
Yet you drive me to madness!
If for your life you care, then answer
me!

What was it made you laugh?

ANTONIA (*pointedly*)

You'd best ask Marta!

THE THREE WOMEN

You'd best ask Marta?

PEDRO

(*Recollecting himself*)

Marta? I am to ask her?

THE THREE WOMEN

(*As they go off*)

Ask Marta?

NURI

(*Has till now been standing timidly in
the background. She now comes
forward and lays her hand on PE-
DRO's shoulder.*)

Ask Marta?

THE THREE WOMEN

For here she comes!

(*They all run off*)

SCENE VI

PEDRO, MARTA

MARTA

(*Has come down, has taken the pot
from the fire and put it on the table*)
Your dinner is there!

(*She adds a loaf and a knife*)

PEDRO

I cannot eat it, Marta,
I've something to tell you.

MARTA (*coming close to him*)

What have you to tell me?

PEDRO (*stretching out his arm*)

Do not come near me, go!
I'm going back to my mountains,
whence I came;
Farewell!

MARTA

You shall not go. For love of Jesus
Christ

Forgive me!

PEDRO

I am to forgive you? When you have
deceived me?

To spurn you, to curse you is what I
ought!

I ought to kill you!

MARTA

Yes, kill me, I beg and pray you for it.

PEDRO

To kill you, no. I'll go away
And never more behold you.

MARTA

(*In desperation tries to detain him*)
Where is your courage? Come and
kill me!

No, you are afraid, faint-hearted cow-
ard you!

PEDRO

Afraid?

MARTA

Revile me, beat me, trample upon me!
Strike with your knife straight at my
heart—

But do not go.

(*She clings to his knees*)

PEDRO

The Lowland kills me, let me seek my
mountains;

You stay down in the mire—with him!
(*He frees himself from her clasp,
pushes her away and goes towards
the gate. She has fallen down, and
raises herself slightly, raising herself
on one arm.*)

MARTA

(Nearly beside herself with desperation, laughing and crying at the same time.)

With him whom I love! Yes, you speak true!

I have deceived you, mark what I say!
You are a coward, afraid to strike—
Do not leave me! Pedro!
I belonged to another man—
His was I. Now do you hear?
His and not thine!

PEDRO

(Turns back furiously and threatens her with his fist)

Silence! .

MARTA

(Gets up, visibly contented that he has not gone)

Oh, can't you see it? How stupid you are!

I have deceived you, and laugh at the fact.

(She laughs like one mad)

I laugh as they all did.
The wedding was merry; they all were laughing, and he,
He was laughing, too.

PEDRO

(Rushes to the table and seizes the knife)

May the Lord strike me if I don't—

MARTA

(Hanging on his left arm)

The other was laughing, ha, ha, ha!

PEDRO (brandishing the knife)
You'll die for this!

MARTA

Then pluck up courage, prepare to strike!
And show that you are not afraid!

PEDRO (retreats from her again)

I can do naught to harm you!

MARTA

(Seeing that he is turning from her, tries to provoke him anew)

Oh, what a craven you must be!
All for some paltry money your honor you have sold.
(She looks at him provocatively)

PEDRO

(Beside himself, brandishes the knife towards her)

My honor sold?

You liar!

(He wounds her arm)

MARTA

Ah, rapture!

PEDRO

(Flinging the knife away in horror)
Oh, what have I done?

MARTA

At last your hand has struck me;
Could you but know how happy I am!

PEDRO

Accurst am I! I'm but a savage beast!
(He drops into a chair, resting his head in his hands in despair)

MARTA

(Comes close to him, kneels down and puts her arms round him)

You did no more than duty asked!
I longed to die, to die thro' you!
And I implore you, strike here, right thro' my heart!

PEDRO

(Horrificed, tries to throw her off)
Leave me!

MARTA

(Weeping, holding him fast in her arms)

Can you not see that I am weary of life?

I long to die! How I should bless it,
Death by your hand!

From sin and sorrow naught will cleanse me

Excepting death.

Believe me, my Pedro, trust my words,
I was not bad, but only wretched.

A cruel world has treated me so hardly,
And crushed my happiness!

Only a fleeting glimpse of joy

Your hand can give me.

Kill me then, and end my suff'rings.

PEDRO

(Folding her in his arms)

I am to kill you? You, whom I worship?

For since first I saw you,
I have loved you to madness.

What do I care, who you may be?

What do I care, what you have done?
For you have bewitched me, I can't escape

From your heart's magic

And strive against it as I may,
I fall but more and more beneath your
spell.

I want to kiss you, want to hold you,
Never be parted from you!
I'll bear you off within my arms
Unto my mountains,
'Mid raging storm and whirling snow,
Up in my mountains' purer air
There will we celebrate our real wed-
ding.

There no one can rob me, no one,
There you'll be mine, mine, mine!
(*She has sunk half fainting into his
arms. He draws her towards the
gate.*)

Now come who dare, I will defy him.

MARTA (*regaining consciousness*)
My God!

PEDRO
(*Raises her, as though to kiss her*)
Now you are mine!

MARTA (*turning away*)
No, no!

PEDRO (*ardently*)
Marta!

MARTA
Ah, do not kiss me till you hear
What I have to tell you.
You must hear from me, how all came
to pass,
And judge me then!
Then do what God may prompt you to!

PEDRO
No, no, not here!

PEDRO and MARTA
First let us arise and go to the moun-
tains

Where we are close to heaven
And near to God Himself,
there will I tell you

And near to God { there will I tell you
Himself, { there shall you tell
me

All that oppresses { my } soul.
{ your }

For love is like a mighty stream.
It purifies all sorrow.

In God's own heart it doth arise,
In God's own hand its pathway lies,

And { if you love me you } will
{ as I love you I } forgive!

PEDRO
Then come!

(*They go towards the gate*)

SCENE VII

MARTA, PEDRO, SEBASTIANO, *then*
MEN and WOMEN

SEBASTIANO
Give you good day! What may the
news be?

PEDRO
'Tis well that you come. Take back
the mill you gave me.
I'm going back whence I came.

SEBASTIANO
(*Without heeding him, to MARTA*)
I'm waiting for the father of my bride,
Till he comes, let's be merry.
You used to dance to please me,
Dance for me now. I'll play the tune.
(*Meanwhile the PEASANTS, MEN and
WOMEN, have entered. SEBASTIANO
takes a guitar from one of them.*)
Dance, do you hear?

(*He plays and sings*)
Come, throw you mantilla around you
with grace

And dance me a lively measure.
Now foot it, beloved, with nimble pace
Dance for my pleasure.

Spin round in tune with the music I
play,
While lightly as air to and fro you
sway,
Now foot it, beloved, with agile pace
Dance for my pleasure.

PEDRO
Enough! and you, Marta, come away!

SEBASTIANO
(*Continues to play and sing
unconcernedly*)
And see that your dancing betrays
what you feel,

Show how your heart is beating,
And let your eyes the bliss reveal
Of lovers' meeting.
Of stolen kisses and joys I could sing.
Of arms that caress and lips that cling.
And let your eyes the bliss reveal
Of lovers' meeting.

PEDRO
Marta, come away!

SEBASTIANO (*angrily*)
What's that he says?

MARTA
He says . . .

PEDRO
We must away!

MARTA
We must away!

SEBASTIANO

(Beside himself seizes MARTA by the arm)

You are demented! It must not be!

PEDRO

What are you doing, sir?

SEBASTIANO *(to PEDRO)*

I'm keeping what's mine.

PEDRO

Is Marta not my wife?

(SEBASTIANO laughs)

MARTA

I'll go with Pedro, and you have no right

To forbid me.

SEBASTIANO

No right? That we will see!

(To the PEOPLE)

Turn out this fellow from here!

(To MARTA)

And you stay here!

PEDRO

(Taking MARTA by the hand)

My wife is mine, and we will go.

SEBASTIANO

Take that for your presumption, you rogue, you vagabond!

*(Gives him a box on the ear)*PEDRO *(yells out in a fury)*

Ah!

MARTA

Pedro, he has struck you!

Take vengeance for't.

PEDRO *(crying with rage)*

How dare I?

He is the master!

MARTA

The master, he?

He was the man who drove your wife To shame and to disgrace.

He brought misfortune over me And you—

He stole last night into my chamber!

PEDRO

What's that you say . . . You?

(He is about to throw himself on SEBASTIANO in a frenzy, but the others hold him off.)

You villain! You thief!

SEBASTIANO

Turn him out!

PEDRO

I'll murder you!

SEBASTIANO

Why this delay? Away with him!

PEDRO

Let me go! Hands off!

I'll kill you! I'll murder you!

(SEBASTIANO, taking hold of MARTA)

She shall remain mine forever!

MARTA

Pedro, my Pedro, help!

PEDRO

I'll save you, as true as God's in heav'n above.

I'll save you!

(The MEN drag off the furious PEDRO, and SEBASTIANO, laughing and triumphant, turns to MARTA who has fallen down unconscious.)

SCENE VIII

(TOMMASO appears in the gateway)

SEBASTIANO

What is it now?

TOMMASO

The father of your bride sends you a message.

SEBASTIANO

Well what is it?

TOMMASO

He sends you greeting, and the match if off!

For his daughter will never be your bride!

SEBASTIANO

What the devil! Who told him the truth!

TOMMASO

I told him all, I myself.

SEBASTIANO

Fool, meddlesome idiot!

(Exit TOMMASO)

MARTA

Holy Virgin, help me now!

SEBASTIANO

Now I have only you to call my own! My bride I have lost, and lost I am myself!

You I will never lose!

MARTA

You may kill me, but I'll not be yours!

SEBASTIANO

Why, my sweetheart, you are wild.

But I shall find a way to tame you.

The mill at least is mine, and you are mine

Then try not to escape me!

MARTA

Oh, by what pow'r in heaven shall I
beg you
To give me freedom?

SEBASTIANO

The heavens remain deaf.
Call to your God and all His Saints
above,
See, I defy them.
Here is the only refuge left to me,
Here will I stay alone with you,
The world may go to hell for aught I
care!

MARTA

Then will you show no mercy?

SEBASTIANO

Love I'll show, but mercy, never!
I cannot live without you!
I cannot breathe without you!

MARTA

And I have also learnt what love is!
I love Pedro—him alone!

SEBASTIANO

Ah, do not mention him. A curse on
him!

MARTA

I'll call for him with all my might!
My Pedro, come and save me!

SEBASTIANO

Peace, Marta, you must be raving!

MARTA

I'm no longer the humble Marta of old,
The weak defenseless child.
I fight not for myself,
I'm fighting for my love, my love and
Pedro,
I'm fighting for my happiness!
That Marta whom you knew, is here
no longer.
You see a wife, prepared to die
For love and Pedro.

SEBASTIANO

How grand you look when angry!
Come let me kiss you, come!

MARTA

Stand back! Let go.
(*She calls*)
Pedro!

SEBASTIANO

Call as you may, 'tis useless,
Submit or I will force you—
(*After struggling desperately with him*
MARTA frees herself and hurries
across the stage.)

MARTA

Will no one save me? (*She calls*)
Pedro!

SEBASTIANO

No, none will save you! Mine you are,
mine!
And with my kisses will I seal your
lips!

(*He rushes towards her*)

MARTA

My Pedro! Come to me!

SEBASTIANO

Your cries are useless!
Now let him come and snatch you from
me!

SCENE IX

(*The above. PEDRO comes out of*
MARTA'S room and is on the stage
with one bound.)

PEDRO

I have come to snatch her from you!
MARTA (*clinging to him*)
My Pedro!

SEBASTIANO (*retreating*)

How come you here?

PEDRO

I've come here through the self-same
door
Thro' which you came last night
As master and thief.
Now we are alone, man for man!—

SEBASTIANO

Be off! Quick!

PEDRO

I am to be off? I?
I am no more the yokel
Whom you came to fetch from Rocca-
bruna—
I am your equal now,
No longer in your service;
Man for man.

SEBASTIANO

How dare you—wait and see!
(*Is about to go to the gate*)

MARTA

Pedro!

PEDRO

(*With one bound he places himself be-
tween SEBASTIANO and the gate*)
You would escape me? Craven hound!
No, you sha'n't get away!
'Tis here and now that we will end the
matter.
Here stands my wife! I have a right
to her!

And yet you dare to claim her!
 Take her then! You must fight for
 her first tho'!
(Draws a knife from his pocket)
 The victor shall possess her.
 And he is victor who survives the
 fight!

SEBASTIANO
 But, you have a knife!
 I have none—

PEDRO
 I need it not,
 The weapon to destroy you is in my
 heart.

(He flings away the knife)
 Come, we now fight fair!

MARTA *(hurrying up to PEDRO)*
 What are you doing?

PEDRO *(pushes her back)*
 Stay where you are and let me be?
(To SEBASTIANO)
 What holds you back? We now fight
 fair!

SEBASTIANO
 Your hour has come!
(He rushes to pick up the knife)

MARTA *(shricks)*
 Ah!

PEDRO
*(Has guessed SEBASTIANO's intention,
 bounds forward and places one foot
 on the knife.)*

You traitor! Can't you fight fairly?
 Now, pick up that knife!

SEBASTIANO *(shouts)*
 Curses on you!

PEDRO
 I pity you, your luck is bad!
 Your day is over now; your tyranny is
 ended.

I mean to end it!
 MARTA
 O' God in Heaven! Holy Virgin!
 Mother of Mercy, send him aid!

SEBASTIANO
 I too can wrestle
 PEDRO
 Well, then try. Defend yourself!
(He seizes him by the throat)
 Guard yourself!

SEBASTIANO
 Help! Help!
 PEDRO
 Call away! Call your men to save you!

SEBASTIANO
 You are choking me!
 MARTA *(drops on her knees in horror)*
 Mother of Mercy!

PEDRO
 No longer can you struggle!
 Your life I have extinguished
 Like a candle blown out by the wind.
(To MARTA)
 Come here, look, he is dead!
*(He flings him down on
 the ground)*

MARTA *(rising)*
 Jesus! *Rever!*
 PEDRO
*(Looks at the dead man a moment,
 then goes to the gate and opens it)*
 Hi, lads, come here! You women, too.
 All of you come!

SCENE X
*(The above. MEN and WOMEN, PEPA,
 ROSALIA, ANTONIA, NURI, TOMMA-
 SO. MARTA is leaning, half fainting,
 against the table.)*

THE LADS
 What's this?
 PEDRO
 The master calls you!
 PEPA *(catching sight of the corpse)*
 Dead?

ROSALIA
 Almighty God!
 TOMMASO
 The wrath of heaven
 Has laid him low!
 God pardon all such sinners.

PEDRO
 And now, why aren't you laughing?
 Laugh!
 Now is the time for laughing!
 Come, Marta, come with me!
 For we will go.

MARTA
 Yes, far from here!

PEDRO *(lifting her in his arms)*
 Away up in my mountains,
 Away to light and freedom!
 Far from the Lowland!
 Stand back, you people,
 Give us room!
 The wicked wolf is dead.
 The wolf is dead, and I have killed
 him!

The curtain falls slowly

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